



## **Communicable Disease Branch Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Bi-Weekly Key Points**

**September 28, 2021**

The North Carolina Division of Public Health (NC DPH) Communicable Disease Branch will be releasing COVID-19 weekly key points that includes information discussed on the bi-weekly Tuesday Local Health Department call. Recordings of the call will not be made available; please use the information below as a summary of the topics presented on the call. As guidance changes, please use the most recent information provided. For questions, contact the NC DPH Communicable Disease Branch 24/7 Epidemiologist on Call at **919-733-3419**.

### **Important Updates**

- **New:** NCDHHS LHD Bi-Weekly Webinar 9 28 2021.pdf (file attached)
- **Updated:** Find My Testing Place Web Upload SeptemberWk3.xlsx (file attached)
- **Updated:** Local Health Vaccine FAQ – 9.29.21.pdf (file attached)

### **Epi Picture**

- CDC has issued two recent updates/clarifications regarding quarantine in schools:
  - Clarification that mask-on-mask quarantine exception in school settings does not apply to close contacts who were < 3 feet from the case, and
  - Removal of guidance allowing for individuals with recent positive antibody results to be exempted from quarantine in some situations.
- LHDs should continue to use the current guidance in the StrongSchoolsNC toolkit unless/until changes are made to address these specific topics.
- NCDHHS is evaluating options for a test-to-stay pilot for K12 settings – i.e., allowing exposed staff or students to remain in school with frequent testing. However, this is not an option that is currently allowed for districts in North Carolina.

### **Policy Update**

- **Revised Statewide Standing Orders for COVID-19 vaccines.** As follow up to the Provider information on Booster doses, please find attached and at this link <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance#vaccination-info-for-providers> revised Standing Orders for COVID vaccines. We have separated out Moderna and Pfizer and included booster info in the Pfizer Standing Order.
- **Extension of School Immunization and Health Assessment Requirements**
  - To ensure that children are not excluded from school because of increased demands on health care providers amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Roy Cooper issued a new [Executive Order](#) and State Health Director Dr. Elizabeth Tilson issued a [State Health Director Memo](#) that suspends, but does not waive, documentation deadlines for proof-of-immunization and health assessment requirements for school and child-care facilities. The Executive Order is needed because increased case rates and viral transmission caused by the Delta variant have limited providers' ability to schedule immunization and health assessment visits. According to the [North Carolina](#)



[Pediatric Society](#), pediatricians are experiencing record levels of demand for sick visits due to viral illnesses.

- In typical years, proof of required immunizations and health assessments are required within 30 days of the first date of attendance of school. After the 30 days, children are to be excluded from school until the family provides documentation of requirements. This year, the 30-day "grace period" for all students will begin on November 1, 2021. Extending these deadlines by will allow more time for families, schools and providers to facilitate access to needed immunizations and health assessments. Families are required to provide the school or childcare facility proof of an upcoming appointment (which could include a written statement from a parent or guardian) by October 8, 2021 and are strongly encouraged to obtain the required immunizations for their children on a timely basis.
- The Executive Order and State Health Director Memo will apply to students enrolled in public, private, or religious educational institutions, including childcare facilities and K-12 schools. The Order also extends the deadline for each child entering a North Carolina public school for the first time to submit proof of a health assessment with that proof of an upcoming appointment. Whether children are home-schooled, attend school in-person or by remote learning, they are required by state law to be immunized based on their age for certain vaccinations as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). More information on North Carolina's requirements for vaccines can be found on the [NCDHHS website](#).
- **School Control Measures** - Document defining roles, responsibilities, and authorities for [COVID-19 Control Measures in Schools](#)

### **Find My Testing Place**

Please review the updated 'Find My Testing Place LHD' Excel file weekly to ensure information is up to date and accurate. Please send the updated files or any related questions to [testfinder@castlighthhealth.com](mailto:testfinder@castlighthhealth.com)

### **Question & Answer**

**Q:** Should we continue contact tracing and quarantining for outside exposures?

**A:** Risk is lower for outdoor exposures. At this point, quarantine is still recommended for close contacts who don't meet specific exception criteria even if exposures occurred outside. However, health departments can prioritize identification and response to exposures in indoor settings when contact tracing resources are limited.

**Q:** We had a person contact our HD stating that they had registered online to receive their additional dose. Person is an EMT. They registered online with the CDC website and got the confirmation information and made an appointment with Walgreens to get the vaccine but was turned away saying that they did not qualify. They originally received Pfizer. Anyone else been told of this issue?

**A:** We are not aware of any issues but have recently sent clarifying language to providers regarding who is eligible.



**Q:** If they don't provide the documentation by October 8th will they need to be suspended, even though they have until November 30th?

**A:** Yes. They need to provide documentation of appointment or documentation of health assessment/immunization by October 8th and must be suspended until they provide documentation of appointment or documentation of health assessment/Immunization.

**Q:** Can you share the link here to the COVID-19 Vaccine Ordering Guidance One-Pager?

**A:** <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/media/3323/download?attachment>

**Q:** We have seen a significant decrease in vaccine info being available in NC EDSS from CVMS. Is there a reason this has become unreliable when a patient claims to have been vaccinated?

**A:** Vaccine information is imported into NC COVID from CVMS weekly using CVMS data from the previous week. The data is imported based on a probabilistic match between the NC COVID and CVMS data. If a patient is in CVMS, but their vaccination information is not showing up in NC COVID, then it is likely due either to the person having been vaccinated too recently, or that their information in CVMS does not match their information in NC COVID well enough to make a match.

**Q:** We often have trouble linking to all press releases, websites, and graphics from NCDHHS and the Governor's Office in our public education re: COVID-19. I've noticed the change in some press releases to include English and Spanish. Is there a continued effort ongoing to ensure all materials and communications related to COVID-19 are in English and Spanish (at least)?

**A:** Yes, there is an attempt to make sure that recipient-facing information is translated.

**Q:** Any information on availability of the mAb infusion requests for existing providers? Are their previous orders being decreased or not filled because new providers are now placing orders? Is there a plan to ensure all counties are receiving infusion? I was contacted by the ONLY medical entity providing infusions in Dare County stating they are out of infusions despite placing orders and they have no idea when they will receive their order. They used to not have any issues getting their order but recently (since changes were made by state/fed) they are now struggling to get their orders and are having to cancel much needed infusion appointments.

**A:** We are reviewing each and every request and looking at the amount on hand and working to meet the need. We cannot however control shipping and distribution from Amerisource Bergen. They can reach out Angela Callicutt, [angel.callicutt@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:angel.callicutt@dhhs.nc.gov), for assistance in requesting to review their allocation and assistance.

**Q:** Timeframe for Moderna and 12-17 year-olds?

**A:** Unknown at this time. It is still under FDA review

**Q:** Can LHD's use the Automated Vaccine Data Entry program?

**A:** Our preference would be for all providers to do documentation in real time, but all providers are eligible for the Automated Vaccine Data Entry Program.

**Q:** Any guidance for a situation where a provider will not test a symptomatic child but provides an alternative diagnosis instead?



**A:** If a symptomatic child has seen a provider and received an alternate diagnosis they can return to school when it has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine) AND they have felt well for at least 24 hours. See page 17 of toolkit here: <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/media/164/open>

**Q:** How do we know what pediatricians in our area are also COVID-vaccine providers and who has not yet been onboarded that we may need to reach out to?

**A:** We will be including this information in the planning information being sent later this week to the LHD listserv.

**Q:** Does the LHD have access to the results in ETOR?

**A:** LHDs have access to the results in ETOR for any specimen they submitted to SLPH.

**Q:** If an unvaccinated child does not need to quarantine from school (due to appropriate masking) but is still technically a close contact (within 6 feet for 15 minutes), do they need to quarantine from everything else?

**A:** No - if both the exposed child and source child were consistently and appropriately masked, the exposed child does not need to quarantine at school or outside of school.

**Q:** Can you please post the address for counties to access if interested in utilizing technology that can read and enter handwritten vaccine forms into CVMS?

**A:** Reach out at [CVMS\\_DES@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:CVMS_DES@dhhs.nc.gov) about becoming a partner to use this technology

**Q:** Please remind us how to get listed on vaccines.gov.

**A:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCDLxIwnhXY>

**Q:** What is the website for requesting CCTO staff?

**A:** [https://ncgov.servicenowservices.com/sp\\_tracing](https://ncgov.servicenowservices.com/sp_tracing)

**Q:** If NC resident who received first/second doses out of state gets a booster in NC, will they be captured in state/county data as fully vaccinated?

**A:** Out of state vaccinations are not recorded within CVMS. In terms of the CDC tracker data the answer would be yes it should be captured at the federal dashboard.